

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date/Time:

Monday, August 19, 2024 – 7:45pm

Meeting Location: Zoom and Borough Hall

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82459767771?pwd=Fn5ajEUQcIg6R50yQbfFu3WusEXzl.1>

Open Public Meeting Statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Bergen Record and/or The Ridgewood News, informing the public of the time and place according to the provision of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1976)

Roll Call:

Members: Lou Baldanza(P), Lisa De Pellegrini(P), Chairman Robert Hanrahan(P), Mairead Jensen(P), Randall Preston(P), Lisa Skoglund(P), Antonio Vozzolo(P) Michelle Zink-Jojic(P), Planning Board Liaison/Member Sherwin Tsai(P) & Council Liaison Christopher Roche(P)

Approval of Minutes – July 15, 2024 - A motion to approve was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by R. Preston.

Meeting Opened to Public Agenda & Non – Agenda Items - A motion to open was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by L. Baldanza.

Meeting Closed to Public - A motion to close was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by M. Jensen.

Communication/Correspondence:

- Day in the Park – September 7, 2024
 - R. Preston and L. Skoglund can help.

New Business:

- Introduction of resident and Master Gardner, Suzy Basu
 - Suzy is a 6 year resident and is interested in working with the EC on environmental projects.
 - Experience in investment banking, elder care, digital transformation and started and manages the Manhattan Kayak Association which offers kayak tours off west side of Manhattan.
 - R. Hanrahan states that we are always looking for people to help and we welcome your experience.
- Kiera Luff – presentation of Eagle Scout project proposal
 - Is a Montvale resident and member of BSA Troop 933 in Upper Saddle River.

- Will construct and install a new bat box at Huff Pond Park.
 - Will remove the old bat box currently in place.
 - Will also improving the landscape by bringing in new dirt, and removing rocks from the riverbank to help to mitigate erosion.
 - Will plant native flowering shrubs near the benches.
 - L. DePellegrini offers help in planning.
 - C. Roche states that the proposal should be presented to the Mayor and Council.
- Hridank Shukla - presentation of Eagle Scout project proposal
 - Is a Montvale resident and member of BSA Troop 334
 - Will construct a trail head at the entrance to the environmental trail detailing the trail and surrounding walkable area around Wegmans.
 - Trailhead will house a map of trail and a QR code for more information on the natural landscape and wildlife on the trail as well as place to deposit dog waste and a shoe brush.
 - Size will be 7 feet by 3 feet.
 - Will create a subpage on the EC webpage that would store the information for the QR code.
 - C. Roche states that the proposal should be presented to the Mayor and Council
- Review of Planning Board Submissions (if applicable)
 - No new submissions to review.
 - Review of ANJEC guidelines regarding site visits to proposed building plans.
 - Michelle Gaynor of ANJEC shared with R. Hanrahan that it is common practice and the EC responsibility to visit sites with proper approval.
 - The Planning Board would bring the EC into the process.
 - S. Tsai states that the EC should be included in site visits with J. DePinto and A. Hippolite. The EC should function in a purely advisory capacity.
 - R. Hanrahan reiterates that ANJEC recommends the sooner the EC is involved the much less problematic the process becomes for all involved.
 - L. Skoglund states that the EC previously received all the landscape plans and confirmed that the plan accurately depicted the property details. There has been a dramatic shift in practice.
 - C. Roche suggests sending advisory information to the engineer.

Old Business:

- Community Project Update (Lisa De Pellegrini) Nothing new to report.
 - Currently working on scheduling a presentation from the Raptor Trust.
- Pascack Trail/Huff Pond Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - Kiera Luff will be helping with north part of the trail as indicated above.
 - Jack Epstein has been putting down mulch. Thank you Jack.
- Revisions to Tree Ordinance – Discussion – No news to report.
- Electric Vehicle Update (Antonio Vozzolo)
 - The charging station is in phase 1 of the plan, construction.

- The only borough owned vehicle considered for an electric replacement is in the construction department. They already have a non-electric vehicle on order but it can be transferred to another department.
- R. Hanrahan has confirmed that there is no backup power source for a charging station in case of emergency.
- Bicycle and Walking Plan (Antonio Vozzolo) – Nothing new to report. In progress.
- Community Garden Update (Robert Hanrahan)
 - We have many residents who want to help out.
 - We are awaiting the approval of the sale of DePiero's property.
- Repair of Environmental Learning Center, trail discussion (Robert Hanrahan/Michelle Zink-Jojic)
 - Hridank Shukla will be helping out with the eagle scout project as described above.
- Council Liaison Report – Chris Roche – Nothing new to report.
- Planning Board Report - Sherwin Tsai
 - 21 Phillips Parkway was approved by the Planning Board.
 - With regard to the number of trees noted on the property and slated for removal the actual number ended up being 62 trees within the preservation zone.
 - Plan states that 92 trees will be replanted.
 - 3 drainage basins will be installed.
 - Concerns from the public have been noted about light pollution.
The architect has made a promise to try to extend the evergreens in the back along the property line.

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by L. Skoglund and seconded by M. Jensen all in favor stating aye.

Next EC Meeting will be on Monday, September 16, 2024